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**IF OTTERS COULD SMILE,
THIS ONE WOULD BE GRINNING
FROM EAR TO EAR**

RIVERFEST 2022 IS MAGICAL!



It was a beautiful night on the patio at Shanty Creek's Cedar River Lodge on

Thursday, August 11th as over 100 people who love Grass River Natural Area gathered to hear about what happened over the past year at GRNA; enjoy some food, drinks, and music; have some fun with friends; and help raise money to support our mission.

Wade Leist, our new auctioneer, promised there would be magic over the course of the night to match the theme of this year's Riverfest, and he did not disappoint! He started with a game of Heads or Tails that got people on their feet as our volunteers encouraged them to buy an arm span of 50/50 raffle tickets to support the GRNA scholarship program. Executive Director Jenn Wright then inspired everyone with news of a successful year and the announcement of a recent donation of \$500,000 to our newly created endowment fund - our largest single gift to date. Wade kept the excitement of that announcement going through the live auction with a Short's Lifetime Mug Membership selling for \$2,300, a 10-day stay in a condo in Southern England bringing in \$2,600, a private Mammoth Distilling tasting tour and blending experience going for \$1,000, and successful bidding on one trip to Iceland and two to go Truffle Hunting in Tuscany ended the live auction on a high. Then things got serious, as you will see in the photo below, when we moved on to raise funds in the Paddle Raise.



Leist challenged the crowd to quickly raise the evening's operations funding goal of \$30,000, so we could move on to raise money for the new boardwalk campaign. Everyone took the challenge to heart, and before we left the \$2,500 level we had those funds in hand. The balance of the money raised could then go toward completing the funding of the upcoming phase of the boardwalk reconstruction. We had already funded a significant portion of that when Wade announced his last idea to make the evening fun! He told everyone that the last person to raise their paddle would get a weeklong stay in Carolyn Burke's and Ric Cicone's condo on Anna Maria Island in Florida. That last bid paddle was raised for \$100, but when he added the trip as a prize, the bidding started in earnest again with people adding hundreds

of dollars to their original gift to try and get the trip. The bidding was fast and furious and GRNA received an additional \$12,300. Carolyn and Ric enjoyed watching their friends support us so fervently that they offered the trip to not one, but three, of the final bidders! Happy faces tell the story of the evening!



Grass River Natural Area may well gross over \$100,000 from this year's Riverfest and that will truly make magic happen for us! We are so appreciative to all our Riverfest sponsors, donors, attendees, and bidders for making the magic happen!

Riverfest photos by Ingrid Henderlight

AND IT'S NOT TOO LATE TO SUPPORT RIVERFEST AND GRNA

The online auction closes at 9:00 pm on Thursday, August 25th, so you still have time to purchase some fabulous items and trips including the ones to Iceland and Italy. We can sell multiple trips to these locations at the bid amount listed on the auction website, so go to fundraiser.bid/riverfest22 and register to bid if you haven't already. And in case you are interested in becoming a Lifetime member of Short's Mug Club, we have another one of those for sale also. The starting bid is \$2,300 and we have a feeling the bidding will be fast and furious on Thursday night.



THANK YOU TO OUR RIVERFEST 2022 SPONSORS

The Pelican Family

Adams Madams	Central Lake Hardware & Lumber
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Bellaire Hardware	The Chief Golf Course & Nest Restaurant
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PROGRAMS ON THE HORIZON

Wildflower walks continue through Tuesday, August 30



Blooms & Birds: Wildflower Walk

Every Tuesday this summer

10:00 am - 12:00 pm

Donations appreciated. No pre-registration is necessary.

Go for a relaxing stroll on the trails with GRNA docents Julie Hurd and Phil Jarvi each week to find and identify the beautiful and unique wildflowers at Grass River. Along the way, we will listen and look for the birds that call Grass River home.

Our Naturalist on the Trail program ended on August 19th as our interns had to return to school, but it will be back next summer.

**Programs Through the End of August
and Beginning of September**



Dyeing with Fungi and Lichens

Thursday, August 25

1:00 - 3:00 pm

\$10 per person

Join Julie Hurd, Grass River Natural Area's wildflower guide, as she weaves the story of fiber dyes created from fungi and lichens. Both these natural sources have long been used to provide a rich range of unique and glowing hues. Attend this presentation for an introduction to the history and techniques used to extract the colors of the fields and forest. [Pre-register here.](#)



Fall Acrylics: Green into Gold

Saturday, September 10

1:00 pm - 3:00 pm

\$10 per person

Interpret the autumn color changes using the vivid colors of acrylics. Arlene Westhoven, GRNA Naturalist, will guide you through the steps of painting what we observe in nature. All materials supplied. For adults and kids 12+. [Pre-register here.](#) Limited space.

Kayak Grass River

Wednesday, September 14

10:00 am – 12:00 pm



\$45 per person - includes tour, kayak, PFD, and paddle for each participant

There is no better way to experience Grass River than by paddling its calm waters and enjoying its unique wildlife! On these morning guided tours, visitors explore Grass River by kayak and find out about GRNA's conservation efforts, wetland plants, and wildlife. **Adults Only. Limited to small groups, must pre-register.** Call GRNA to register: 231-492-8793, or email james@grassriver.org. This program meets at the Grass River Center and then walks to the dock to launch kayaks. Kayaks and paddles are provided and ready for you at the dock.



Fall Mushroom Foray

Saturday, September 17

1:00 pm - 3:00 pm

\$10 per person

Tour the woods and fields with a naturalist to freshen up on your mushroom identification skills. On the trek, you will seek, find, and identify fun fall fungi. In the process, learn about the life cycles, habitats, and features of these organisms. [Pre-register here.](#)

**GRASS RIVER CENTER HOURS
through October**

10:00 am - 4:00 pm, 7 days per week

Trails open dawn to dusk

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A portion of the sale comes back to GRNA as a donation.

Grass River Natural Area is a nonprofit organization that has flourished for fifty-two years because of the generous support of people who value our mission "to manage the Grass River Natural Area, conserve and protect its watershed, and provide opportunities that increase knowledge, appreciation, and community-wide stewardship of the natural environment".

If you believe in our mission and want to help us fulfill it for many years to come, please click on the Donate button below. Your support is greatly appreciated.

DONATE



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